

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-20 SWF-02 EB-11 AID-20 PA-04 PRS-01

USIA-15 L-03 H-03 SP-03 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01

SS-20 NSC-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 IGA-02 /141 R

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R 241750Z SEP 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EAID, EG

SUBJECT: PL-480 PRESS LEAKS

REF: CAIRO 7091

1. WE RECOGNIZE THE APPARENT ABILITY OF THE EGYPTIAN PRESS TO FERRET OUT INFORMATION OF FORTHCOMING ASSISTANCE AND ITS PROPENSITY TO JUMP GUN ON PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS, OFTEN WITH ERRONEOUS INFORMATION. ALSO REALIZE THAT EMBASSY CAN HAVE LITTLE CONTROL OVER THIS PROCESS. HOWEVER, RECENT PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT BY EGYPTIANS DID CAUSE PROBLEMS HERE IN WASHINGTON.

2. IT IS OUR POLICY TO REFRAIN FROM ANY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW PL-480 AGREEMENTS AND ON AMENDMENTS UNTIL SIGNING COMPLETED. WHEN SIGNING CABLE RECEIVED HERE, CONGRESS IS NOTIFIED AND A PRESS RELEASE IS ISSUED BY AGRICULTURE GIVING FULL DETAILS OF NEW AGREEMENT. WHEN EGYPTIANS MADE

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PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 9, TRADE AND NEWS

MEDIA MADE NUMEROUS INQUIRIES FOR ADDITIONAL DETAILS. AS MATTER STILL TREATED HERE AS CLASSIFIED, NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WAS FURNISHED.

3. PRIOR TO SIGNING OF NEXT PL-480 AGREEMENT EMBASSY SHOULD ADVISE APPROPRIATE GOE OFFICIALS THAT PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT OR LEAKS CAUSE PROBLEMS NOT ONLY WITH TRADE AND NEWS MEDIA, BUT ALSO WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. THERE-

FORE WE SHOULD URGE EGYPTIAN COOPERATION IN AWAITING THE SIGNING FOR ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS. AT THAT POINT THEY MAKE THEIR ANNOUNCEMENT AND THE EMBASSY SENDS THE IMMEDIATE CONFIRMATION CABLE WHICH ALLOWS USDA TO MAKE ALMOST A SIMULTANEOUS ANNOUNCEMENT IN WASHINGTON.

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